

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ALGIERS 2468

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: BEXP, AG, VM
SUBJ: INVITATION OF VIETNAMESE OFFICIALS TO AMERICAN RECEPTION
AT ALGIERS INTERNATIONAL FAIR

1. WE WOULD APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT'S GUIDANCE ON INVITING VIETNAMESE DIPLOMATS, PARTICULARLY THOSE CONCERNED WITH ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL AFFAIRS, TO AN EMBASSY RECEPTION AT THE ALGIERS INTERNATIONAL FAIR. WE SEE THIS AS BENEFICIAL TO THE UNOFFICIAL DIALOGUE NOW GOING ON BETWEEN THE U.S. AND THE SVN.

2. AS PART OF OUR PARTICIPATION IN THE 1978 ALGIERS FAIR, WE PLAN TO HOST A RECEPTION FOR ABOUT 400 GUESTS ON THE EVENING OF SEPTEMBER 23. SINCE WE ARE INVITING MEMBERS OF ALL DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS HERE WITH WHOM WE HAVE RELATIONS, AS WELL AS APPROPRIATE ALGERIAN GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, REPRESENTATIVES OF ALGERIAN NATIONAL COMPANIES AND AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN RESIDENT IN ALGIERS, IT WOULD BE LOGICAL TO ASK MIDDLE-LEVEL VIETNAMESE COMMERCIAL OFFICIALS TO ATTEND. SVN DIPLOMATS HERE HAVE THUS FAR AVOIDED OFFICIAL CONTACTS WITH US, ALTHOUGH THEY ARE QUITE FRIENDLY WHENEVER WE MEET BY CHANCE, BUT AN OPPORTUNITY TO MEET REPRESENTATIVES OF MAJOR AMERICAN FIRMS MIGHT CHANGE THEIR MINDS. IN LIGHT OF THE SVN DESIRE FOR ASSISTANCE BY U.S. OIL COMPANIES AND ACCESS TO AMERICAN TECHNOLOGY, SUCH CONTACTS MIGHT PRESENT USEFUL OPPORTUNITIES FOR AMERICAN FIRMS.

3. WE BELIEVE THAT INFORMAL VIETNAMESE CONTACTS WITH AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN COULD HELP TO IMPROVE POLITICAL RELATIONS AS WELL. WE NOTE
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THAT AMERICAN FIRMS HAD SIGNIFICANT COMMERCIAL CONTRACTS WITH ALGERIA LONG BEFORE THERE WAS EVEN A MILD THAW IN U.S.-ALGERIAN POLITICAL RELATIONS, AND THAT PART OF THE STIMULUS FOR BETTER INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONTACTS WAS AN ALGERIAN DESIRE TO INCREASE AMERICAN BUSINESS INVOLVEMENT. THE SAME CIRCUMSTANCES MIGHT APPLY TO VIETNAME; IT'S WORTH A TRY. HAYNES

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